



# Rare Plants of Louisiana



## *Eleocharis wolfii* – Wolf's spikerush Sedge family (Cyperaceae)

**Rarity Ranks:** S3/G3G4

**Range:** TX east to GA and north to ND and WI

### Recognition:

- 1) Plants blue-green, 10-30 cm tall, with wiry rhizomes
- 2) Stems distinctly flattened and twisted, with reddish bases
- 3) Stems grooved (best viewed with magnification)
- 4) Fruits having several pronounced longitudinal ridges, with horizontally-elongated cells occurring between the ridges

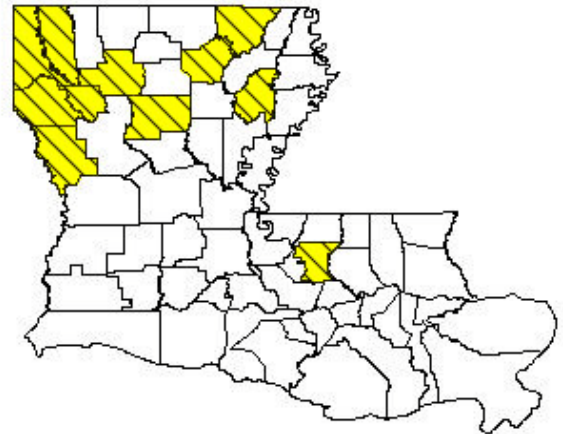
**Flowering time:** April-May; fruit in May-June; plants decline by late June or early July

**Light Requirement:** Full sun – part shade

**Wetland Indicator Status:** OBL – almost always occurs in wetlands

### Habitat:

Louisiana occurrences are mostly in small shallow depressions in saline prairies and in depressions in wet Intermediate Terrace flatwoods. In Arkansas, this species occurs in depressions on prairie remnants in several parts of the state, saline prairies, several glade types, and pine and hardwood flatwoods. In Texas it occurs in wet swales in coastal prairies. Several Louisiana sites for this species are in utility ROWs where open conditions exist. Plants in adjacent over-stocked forests tend to be sparse and leggy. *E. wolfii* can occur in ditches and ruts in flatwoods and on sodic soils and is reported to persist in these man-made habitats in areas where prairies formerly existed.



### Threats:

- 1) Conversion to pine plantations (shading)
- 2) Chemical and mechanical site prep (herbicides, bedding, etc.)
- 3) Fire exclusion

### Beneficial management practices:

- 1) Thinning and prescribed burning
- 2) Mowing of utility ROWs to limit shrub encroachment – utility ROWs can preserve the herbaceous ground cover that has been shaded out by dense pine plantations



*Eleocharis wolfii* stem - showing blue-green color, flattened and twisted stems



*Eleocharis wolfii* stand, Morehouse Parish, Louisiana

## References:

Diggs, G. M., B. L. Liscomb, M. D. Reed, and R. J. O'kennon. 2006. Illustrated Flora of East Texas. Vol. 1. Botanical Research Institute of Texas & Austin College. 1594 pp.

Godfrey, R. K. and J. W. Wooten. 1981. Aquatic and wetland plants of the southeastern United States: Monocotyledons. University of Georgia Press, Athens, GA. 712 pp.

NatureServe. 2007. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 6.2. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>.

USDA, NRCS. 2007. The PLANTS Database (<http://plants.usda.gov>, 3 July 2007). National Plant Data Center, Baton Rouge, LA 70874-4490 USA.

Updated February 2009

For more information, please visit our web pages at [www.wlf.louisiana.gov/experience/naturalheritage](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/experience/naturalheritage) or call 225-765-2821